

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, March 24, 2003
Volume 39—Number 12
Pages 329–352

Contents

Addresses to the Nation

Iraq—338, 342

Addresses and Remarks

See also Addresses to the Nation; Meetings

With Foreign Leaders

Cabinet meeting—343

Congressional leaders, meeting—347

Radio address—329

Communications to Congress

Federal ocean and coastal activities, message transmitting report—342

Iraq

Letter on commencement of military action—348

Letter on conclusion of diplomatic efforts—341

Message reporting on confiscation and vesting of certain Iraqi property—345

Terrorism

Letter reporting on U.S. efforts in the global war—346

Message transmitting report on national emergency with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support—349

Communications to Congress—Continued

UNITA, message transmitting report on national emergency—342

United Nations and its affiliated agencies, message transmitting report on U.S. participation—342

Communications to Federal Agencies

Determination Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as Amended, memorandum—346

Executive Orders

Confiscating and Vesting Certain Iraqi Property—344

Interviews With the News Media

Exchange with reporters in the Oval Office—347

News conference with Prime Minister Durao Barroso of Portugal, President Aznar of Spain, and Prime Minister Blair of the United Kingdom in the Azores, Portugal—330

(Continued on the inside of the back cover.)

Editor's Note: The President was at Camp David, MD, on March 21, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under

regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for \$80.00 per year (\$137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for \$93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is \$3.00 (\$3.75 for foreign mailing).

There are no restrictions on the republication of material appearing in the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*.

Contents—Continued

Joint Statements

- Statement of the Atlantic Summit: A Vision for Iraq and the Iraqi People—336
- Statement of the Atlantic Summit: Commitment to Transatlantic Solidarity—336

Letters and Messages

- Nowruz, message—344
- Saint Patrick's Day, message—338

Meetings With Foreign Leaders

- Portugal, Prime Minister Durao Barroso—330, 336
- Spain, President Aznar—330, 336
- United Kingdom, Prime Minister Blair—330, 336

Proclamations

- Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy—341

Statements by the President

- House of Representatives passage of the budget resolution—348
- Social Security Trustees, 2003 report—337

Supplementary Materials

- Acts approved by the President—352
- Checklist of White House press releases—351
- Digest of other White House announcements—349
- Nominations submitted to the Senate—351

Week Ending Friday, March 21, 2003

The President's Radio Address

March 15, 2003

Good morning. This weekend marks a bitter anniversary for the people of Iraq. Fifteen years ago, Saddam Hussein's regime ordered a chemical weapons attack on a village in Iraq called Halabja. With that single order, the regime killed thousands of Iraq's Kurdish citizens. Whole families died while trying to flee clouds of nerve and mustard agents descending from the sky. Many who managed to survive still suffer from cancer, blindness, respiratory diseases, miscarriages, and severe birth defects among their children.

The chemical attack on Halabja, just one of 40 targeted at Iraq's own people, provided a glimpse of the crimes Saddam Hussein is willing to commit and the kind of threat he now presents to the entire world. He is among history's cruelest dictators, and he is arming himself with the world's most terrible weapons.

Recognizing this threat, the United Nations Security Council demanded that Saddam Hussein give up all his weapons of mass destruction as a condition for ending the Gulf war 12 years ago. The Security Council has repeated this demand numerous times and warned that Iraq faces serious consequences if it fails to comply. Iraq has responded with defiance, delay, and deception.

The United States, Great Britain, and Spain continue to work with fellow members of the U.N. Security Council to confront this common danger. We have seen far too many instances in the past decade, from Bosnia to Rwanda to Kosovo, where the failure of the Security Council to act decisively has led to tragedy. And we must recognize that some threats are so grave and their potential consequences so terrible that they must be removed, even if it requires military force.

As diplomatic efforts continue, we must never lose sight of the basic facts about the regime of Baghdad. We know from recent

history that Saddam Hussein is a reckless dictator who has twice invaded his neighbors without provocation, wars that led to death and suffering on a massive scale. We know from human rights groups that dissidents in Iraq are tortured, imprisoned, and sometimes just disappear; their hands, feet, and tongues are cut off; their eyes are gouged out; and female relatives are raped in their presence.

As the Nobel laureate and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel said this week, "We have a moral obligation to intervene where evil is in control. Today, that place is Iraq."

We know from prior weapons inspections that Saddam has failed to account for vast quantities of biological and chemical agents, including mustard agent, botulinum toxin, and sarin, capable of killing millions of people. We know the Iraqi regime finances and sponsors terror. And we know the regime has plans to place innocent people around military installations to act as human shields.

There is little reason to hope that Saddam Hussein will disarm. If force is required to disarm him, the American people can know that our Armed Forces have been given every tool and every resource to achieve victory. The people of Iraq can know that every effort will be made to spare innocent life and to help Iraq recover from three decades of totalitarian rule. And plans are in place to provide Iraqis with massive amounts of food, as well as medicine and other essential supplies, in the event of hostilities.

Crucial days lie ahead for the free nations of the world. Governments are now showing whether their stated commitments to liberty and security are words alone or convictions they're prepared to act upon. And for the Government of the United States and the coalition we lead, there is no doubt: We will confront a growing danger, to protect ourselves, to remove a patron and protector of terror, and to keep the peace of the world.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:21 a.m. on March 14 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 15. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 14 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

**The President's News Conference
With Prime Minister Jose Manuel
Durao Barroso of Portugal,
President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain,
and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the
United Kingdom in the Azores,
Portugal**

March 16, 2003

Prime Minister Durao Barroso. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I am very pleased to welcome here in the Azores the leaders of three friends and allied countries, the United States, Spain, and United Kingdom; President Bush, Prime Minister Aznar, and Prime Minister Tony Blair.

This meeting in the Azores also shows the importance of transatlantic relations and also shows the solidarity among our countries. Actually, these agreements have approved two statements, one statement on transatlantic relations and a statement on Iraq.

We have joined this initiative, and we organized it here in the Azores because we thought this was the last opportunity for a political solution. And this is how we see it: This is the last possibility for a political solution to the problem. Maybe it's a small chance, a small possibility, but even if it's one in one million, it's always worthwhile fighting for a political solution. And I think this is the message that we can get from this Atlantic summit.

As I was saying, for my English-speaking guests, I'll speak English now. First of all, let me say, welcome, George Bush, to Europe. I think it's important that we meet here, in a European country, in Portugal, but in this territory of Azores that is halfway between the continent of Europe and the continent of America. I think it's not only logistically convenient; it has a special polit-

ical meaning, the political meaning of our friendship and our commitment to our shared values.

So welcome to all of you. Welcome to you. And I now give the floor to President George Bush.

President Bush. Jose, thank you very much for your hospitality. You've done a great job on such short notice. And I'm honored to be standing here with you and two other friends as we work toward a great cause, and that is peace and security in this world.

We've had a really good discussion. We've been doing a lot of phone talking, and it was good to get together and to visit and to talk. And we concluded that tomorrow is a moment of truth for the world. Many nations have voiced a commitment to peace and security. And now they must demonstrate that commitment to peace and security in the only effective way, by supporting the immediate and unconditional disarmament of Saddam Hussein.

The dictator of Iraq and his weapons of mass destruction are a threat to the security of free nations. He is a danger to his neighbors. He's a sponsor of terrorism. He's an obstacle to progress in the Middle East. For decades, he has been the cruel, cruel oppressor of the Iraq people.

On this very day 15 years ago, Saddam Hussein launched a chemical weapons attack on the Iraqi village of Halabja. With a single order the Iraqi regime killed thousands of men and women and children, without mercy or without shame. Saddam Hussein has proven he is capable of any crime. We must not permit his crimes to reach across the world.

Saddam Hussein has a history of mass murder. He possesses the weapons of mass murder. He agrees—he agreed to disarm Iraq of these weapons as a condition for ending the Gulf war over a decade ago. The United Nations Security Council in Resolution 1441 has declared Iraq in material breach of its longstanding obligations, demanded once again Iraq's full and immediate disarmament, and promised serious consequences if the regime refused to comply. That resolution was passed unanimously, and its logic is inescapable: The Iraqi regime will

disarm itself, or the Iraqi regime will be disarmed by force. And the regime has not disarmed itself.

Action to remove the threat from Iraq would also allow the Iraqi people to build a better future for their society. And Iraq's liberation would be the beginning, not the end, of our commitment to its people. We will supply humanitarian relief, bring economic sanctions to a swift close, and work for the long-term recovery of Iraq's economy. We'll make sure that Iraq's natural resources are used for the benefit of their owners, the Iraqi people.

Iraq has the potential to be a great nation. Iraq's people are skilled and educated. We'll push as quickly as possible for an Iraqi interim authority to draw upon the talents of Iraq's people to rebuild their nation. We're committed to the goal of a unified Iraq, with democratic institutions of which members of all ethnic and religious groups are treated with dignity and respect.

To achieve this vision, we will work closely with the international community, including the United Nations and our coalition partners. If military force is required, we'll quickly seek new Security Council resolutions to encourage broad participation in the process of helping the Iraqi people to build a free Iraq.

Crucial days lie ahead for the world. I want to thank the leaders here today and many others for stepping forward and taking leadership and showing their resolve in the cause of peace and the cause of security.

Jose Maria.

President Aznar. Good evening, everyone. I would firstly like to thank the Prime Minister, Jose Manuel Durao, for his hospitality and welcome, which I particularly am grateful for. And I'm very pleased to be in the Azores once again.

I have short remarks on our debates on this situation and on the documents we've agreed on during today's meeting. I'd first like to refer to our document on Atlantic solidarity. We have renewed Atlantic commitment on our common values and principles, in favor of democracy, freedom, and the rule of law.

We understand that the expression of this commitment is essential, by way of guarantee

of peace, security, and international freedom. And I honestly believe that there is no other alternative to the expression of the Atlantic commitment in terms of security. We are committed on a day-to-day fight against new threats, such as terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and tyrannic regimes that do not comply with international law. They threaten all of us, and we must all act, consequently.

This transatlantic link, this transatlantic solidarity, has always been, is, and should continue to be, in my opinion, a great European commitment, and as such, amongst other things, we express it this way: Without this commitment, today's Europe could not be understood; and without that commitment, it would be very difficult to picture the Europe of tomorrow.

So I would like to invite our friends, our allies, to leave aside any circumstantial differences and to work together seriously for that commitment of democracy, freedom, and peace, so that this becomes a commitment of us all.

We've agreed on launching, on boosting the Middle East peace process, and on our vision that that peace process has to accommodate with all necessary security guarantees and putting an end to terrorism. And this should end with the peaceful coexistence of two states, an independent Palestinian state and the Israeli state.

In view of the situation created by Iraq, with their continued noncompliance of international law, I would like to remind you that we all said before we came here that we were not coming to the Azores to make a declaration of war, that we were coming after having made every possible effort, after having made this effort, continuing to make this effort, to working to achieve the greatest possible agreement, and for international law to be respected and for U.N. resolutions to be respected.

And we would like to say that we are aware of the fact that this is the last opportunity—the last opportunity expressed in Resolution 1441, adopted unanimously by the Security Council, and that, being aware that this is the last opportunity, we are also making the last effort. And we are ready to make this last effort of the very many efforts we've been

making throughout these last weeks and months.

We are well aware of the international world public opinion, of its concern. And we are also very well aware of our responsibilities and obligations. If Saddam Hussein wants to disarm and avoid the serious consequences which he has been warned about by the United Nations, he can do so. And nothing in our document nor in our statement can prevent him from doing so if he wants to. So his is the sole responsibility.

Tony.

Prime Minister Blair. Thank you, Jose Maria. Thank you, Jose, for hosting us today. And I think it's worth just returning to the key point, which is our responsibility to uphold the will of the United Nations set out in Resolution 1441 last November. And for 4½ months now, we've worked hard to get Saddam to cooperate fully, unconditionally, as that resolution demanded.

Even some days ago we were prepared to set out clear tests that allowed us to conclude whether he was cooperating fully or not, with a clear ultimatum to him if he refused to do so. And the reason we approached it in that way is that that is what we agreed in Resolution 1441. This was his final opportunity. He had to disarm unconditionally. Serious consequences would follow if he failed to do so.

And this is really the impasse that we have, because some say there should be no ultimatum, no authorization of force in any new U.N. resolution; instead, more discussion in the event of noncompliance. But the truth is that without a credible ultimatum authorizing force in the event of noncompliance, then more discussion is just more delay, with Saddam remaining armed with weapons of mass destruction and continuing a brutal, murderous regime in Iraq.

And this game that he is playing is, frankly, a game that he has played over the last 12 years. Disarmament never happens. But instead, the international community is drawn into some perpetual negotiation, gestures designed to divide the international community but never real and concrete cooperation leading to disarmament.

And there's not a single person on the Security Council that doubts the fact he is not

fully cooperating today. Nobody, even those who disagree with the position that we have outlined, is prepared to say there is full cooperation as 1441 demanded.

Not a single interview has taken place outside of Iraq, even though 1441 provided for it. Still, no proper production or evidence of the destruction, or for example—just to take one example, the 10,000 liters of anthrax that the inspectors just a week ago said was unaccounted for. And that is why it is so important that the international community at this time gives a strong and unified message.

And I have to say that I really believe that hadn't we given that strong message some time ago, Saddam might have realized that the games had to stop. So now we have reached the point of decision, and we make a final appeal for there to be that strong, unified message on behalf of the international community that lays down a clear ultimatum to Saddam that authorizes force if he continues to defy the will of the whole of the international community set out in 1441.

We will do all we can in the short time that remains to make a final round of contacts, to see whether there is a way through this impasse. But we are in the final stages, because after 12 years of failing to disarm him, now is the time when we have to decide.

Two other points, briefly, on the documents that we've put before you. The first is the—President Aznar was just saying to you a moment or two ago on the transatlantic alliance is, I think, very important. Some of you will have heard me say this before, but let me just repeat it. I believe that Europe and America should stand together on the big issues of the day. I think it is a tragedy when we don't. And that transatlantic alliance is strong, and we need to strengthen it still further.

And secondly, we've set out for you that should it come to conflict, we make a pledge to the people of Iraq. As President Bush was just saying to you a moment or two ago, it is the people of Iraq who are the primary victims of Saddam: the thousands of children that die needlessly every year; the people locked up in his prisons or executed simply for showing disagreement with the regime;

a country that is potentially prosperous reduced to poverty; 60 percent of the population reliant on food aid.

And what we say is that we will protect Iraq's territorial integrity; we will support representative government that unites Iraq on the democratic basis of human rights and the rule of law; that we will help Iraq rebuild—and not rebuild because of the problems of conflict, where if it comes to that, we will do everything we can to minimize the suffering of the Iraqi people, but rebuild Iraq because of the appalling legacy that the rule of Saddam has left the Iraqi people—and in particular, Iraq's natural resources remain the property of the people of Iraq. And that wealth should be used for the Iraqi people. It is theirs and will remain so, administered by the U.N. in the way we set out.

Finally, on the Middle East peace process, I welcome very much the statement that President Bush made the other day. I think it's important now. He said he wanted a partner on the Palestinian side. I think the coming appointment of Abu Mazen is so important there. It allows us to take this process forward. The roadmap give us the way forward. The appointment of Abu Mazen gives us the right partner to take this forward. And I believe that that will demonstrate—and it's important to demonstrate in particular at this time—that our approach to people in the Middle East, in that troubled region, is indeed evenhanded. And all of us will work to make sure that that vision of a Middle East, two states, Israel confident of its security, a Palestinian state that is viable, comes about and is made reality.

Thank you.

Summit Results/Portugal's Role in the Coalition

Q. [*Inaudible*].

President Bush. They couldn't hear the question.

Q. I was asking the Portuguese Prime Minister, how does he see the result of this summit? Does the Prime Minister think that starting now, Portugal has more responsibilities with this war that seems to be inevitable?

Prime Minister Durao Barroso. The results of this summit, as I described them and

as all the other heads of state and government said it, too, this summit is—this is the last opportunity for a political solution to this very serious problem for the international community. This has been said here. It's been said here that tomorrow we'll start with these last initiatives towards a political solution. And for that reason I am very, very happy with the results of this summit.

Now, coming to our responsibility in case there is a conflict, I must say that the responsibility falls entirely on the dictator Saddam Hussein. He bears the entire responsibility because he has not respected for all of these years international law and consistently violated the U.N. resolutions. And in that case, if there is a conflict, I want to repeat it once more, Portugal will be next—side by side with his allies. And the fact that we are here today in the Azores with the United States, with Spain, and with the UK, this is very significant.

As it's been said here before, the transatlantic relationship is very, very important, not only for Europe and for the U.S., but it's very important for the whole world. I remember a few days ago, Kofi Annan in the European conference in Brussels, said the same thing. He said this is very important. It's very important for Europe and the U.S. to remain united and not separate, because the world needs the U.S. and Europe working together towards the same direction, in the same sense—not only about the security but also fighting underdevelopment and all the other tasks that fall to the international community.

President Bush. Ron Fournier [Associated Press].

Last Effort at Diplomacy

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Before I ask my question I just want to nail down one thing so there's no confusion. When you talk about tomorrow being the moment of truth, are you saying that is the—

President Bush. Just a question, or are you trying to work in two questions?

Q. Yes, sir. [*Laughter*] Because there's one thing we need to make clear. When you say tomorrow is the moment of truth, does that mean tomorrow is the last day that the resolution can be voted up or down, and at the

end of the day tomorrow, one way or another the diplomatic window has closed?

President Bush. That's what I'm saying.

Q. Thank you, sir. And now for the question—

President Bush. And now for your question?

Q. That being the case, regardless—

President Bush. That being my answer—

Q. Regardless of whether the resolution goes up or down or gets withdrawn, it seems to me you're going to be facing a moment of truth. And given that you've already said you don't think there's very much chance Saddam Hussein is going to disarm, and given that you say you don't think there's very much chance he's going to go into exile, aren't we going to war here?

President Bush. Tomorrow is the day that we will determine whether or not diplomacy can work. And we sat and visited about this issue, about how best to spend our time between now and tomorrow. And as Prime Minister Blair said, we'll be working the phones and talking to our partners and talking to those who may not clearly understand the objective, and we'll see how it goes tomorrow.

Saddam Hussein can leave the country, if he's interested in peace. You see, the decision is his to make. And it's been his to make all along as to whether or not there's the use of the military. He got to decide whether he was going to disarm, and he didn't. He can decide whether he wants to leave the country. These are his decisions to make, and thus far he has made bad decisions.

Further Discussion at the United Nations

Q. I understand that if tomorrow is the day for taking the final decision, that means that you consider that there's no possible way out through the United Nations because a majority does not support a war action. I would like to know, Mr. Blair, Mr. Bush, whether in that military offensive you count on many countries, whether it's going to be the UK and the U.S. carrying out the military offensive? I understand from what Mr. Blair has said that you're counting on the U.N. for the reconstruction. Are you going to look for other countries through the United Nations?

And for Mr. Aznar, what is Spain's participation in that military offensive, in addition to your political support?

President Bush. [*Inaudible*].—Resolution 1441, which was unanimously approved, that says Saddam Hussein would unconditionally disarm, and if he didn't, there would be serious consequences. The United Nations Security Council looked at the issue 4½ months ago and voted unanimously to say: Disarm immediately and unconditionally, and if you don't, there are going to be serious consequences. The world has spoken. And it did in a unified voice.

Sorry.

Prime Minister Blair. The issue is very simply this, that we cannot have a situation where what happens through the United Nations, having agreed 1441, having said there would be serious consequences if he doesn't cooperate fully and unconditionally, what we cannot have is a situation where we simply go back for endless discussion.

Now, we have provided the right diplomatic way through this, which is to lay down a clear ultimatum to Saddam: Cooperate or face disarmament by force. And that is entirely within the logic, the letter, the spirit of 1441. And that is why—you know, all the way through we have tried to provide a diplomatic solution. After over 4½ months since we passed Resolution 1441, we're now, what, 3 months on from the declaration that Saddam made on the 8th of December that not a single person in the international community—not one—believes was an honest declaration of what he had. And yet, 1441 said the first step of cooperation was to make an honest declaration.

So when people say haven't we exhausted all the diplomatic avenues, we've tried exhausting them. But understand from our perspective and from the perspective of the security of the world, we cannot simply go back to the Security Council for this discussion to be superseded by that discussion, to be superseded by another discussion. That's what's happened for 12 years. That's why he's still got the weapons of mass destruction. We have to come to the point of decision. And that really is what the next period of time is going to be about.

President Aznar. Well, I would like to say that this statement we're making today, as we've all said, it's a last chance, one last attempt to reach the greatest possible consensus amongst ourselves. And I can assure all of you that we've made—we have all made—enormous efforts, and we're going to continue making these efforts in order to try to reach an agreement, to reach a solution.

We have our own worry, our own responsibility to make U.N. resolutions be abided by. If the Security Council unanimously adopts a resolution—Resolution 1441—giving one last opportunity to disarm to someone who has weapons of mass destruction, and we know he has used them, the Security Council cannot, one year after the other, wait for its resolutions to be implemented. That would be the best way to do away with it altogether. And it could do away with all the United Nations' credibility, and we honestly don't want that to happen.

To me, there is no—you cannot have the same distance between illegality and impunity. And neither Saddam Hussein nor any other tyrant with weapons of mass destruction can set the rules for international law and the international community.

Role of the United Nations

Q. Andrew Marr, from the BBC. Can I ask, first of all, Prime Minister Blair—you said that you want a second resolution to be put down and voted on. Could we be clear? Is that what's going to happen tomorrow, under all circumstances?

And either way—also, if I may, for President Bush—if you don't get that second resolution, what is the future for the United Nations? You've talked about Saddam Hussein dividing world community. Surely, he succeeded.

Prime Minister Blair. Well, on your last point, I think this is one of the things that is tragic about this situation, that Saddam plays these games, and we carry on allowing him to play them. Now, we will do, in the next period of time, in respect to the resolution, what we believe to be in the interest of the U.N.

But I want to say why I think it is so important that even now, at this late stage, we try to get the United Nations to be the route

of resolving this, because the threat is there and everyone accepts it, the threat of weapons of mass destruction, the threat of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of terrorists who will cause maximum damage to our people. Everybody accepts the disarmament of Saddam has to happen. Everybody accepts that he was supposed to cooperate fully with the inspectors. Everybody accepts that he is not doing so.

So, whatever the tactics within the U.N.—and that's something we can decide—whatever those tactics, the key point of principle is this, that when we came together last November and laid down Resolution 1441, now is the moment when we decide whether we meant it and it was his final opportunity to disarm or face serious consequences, or whether, alternatively, we're simply going to drag out the diplomatic process forever. And that's why I say it's the point of decision.

Q. Vote or not?

President Bush. I was the guy that said they ought to vote. And one country voted. They showed their cards, I believe. It's an old Texas expression, "Show your cards, when you're playing poker." France showed their cards. After I said what I said, they said they were going to veto anything that held Saddam to account. So cards have been played, and we'll just have to take an assessment after tomorrow to determine what that card meant.

Let me say something about the U.N. It's a very important organization. That's why I went there on September the 12th, 2002, to give the speech, the speech that called the U.N. into account, that said if you're going to pass resolutions, let's make sure your words mean something. Because I understand the wars of the 21st century are going to require incredible international cooperation. We're going to have to cooperate to cut off the money of the terrorists and the ability for nations, dictators who have weapons of mass destruction, to provide training and perhaps weapons to terrorist organizations. We need to cooperate, and we are. Our countries up here are cooperating incredibly well.

And the U.N. must mean something. Remember Rwanda, or Kosovo. The U.N. didn't do its job. And we hope tomorrow the U.N. will do its job. If not, all of us need

to step back and try to figure out how to make the U.N. work better as we head into the 21st century. Perhaps one way will be, if we use military force, in the post-Saddam Iraq the U.N. will definitely need to have a role. And that way it can begin to get its legs, legs of responsibility back.

But it's important for the U.N. to be able to function well if we're going to keep the peace. And I will work hard to see to it that, at least from our perspective, that the U.N. is able to be a responsible body, and when it says something, it means it, for the sake of peace and for the sake of the security, for the capacity to win the war of—the first war of the 21st century, which is the war against terrorism and weapons of mass destruction in the hands of dictators.

Thank you all.

Prime Minister Durao Barroso. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. This is the end of the conference. Have a good trip.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 5:30 p.m. in the community activity center ballroom at Lajes Field Air Force Base, Terceira Island. Prime Minister Durao Barroso spoke in Portuguese, and President Aznar spoke in Spanish, and their remarks were translated by interpreters. Some questions were also asked in Portuguese or Spanish and then translated by interpreters. In his remarks, President Bush referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. Prime Minister Blair referred to Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), who accepted the post of Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority on March 19. Prime Minister Durao Barroso referred to Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations.

Statement of the Atlantic Summit: Commitment to Transatlantic Solidarity

March 16, 2003

We, the leaders of four democracies with strong Transatlantic affiliation, meet at a time of great challenge. We face painful choices.

We uphold a vision of international security we share with other nations. Our nations and people know the horror of war, whether visited upon us, or whether we are called to confront a great danger.

At this difficult moment, we reaffirm our commitment to our core values and the Transatlantic Alliance that has embodied them for two generations. Our alliance rests on a common commitment to democracy, freedom, and the rule of law. We are bound by solemn commitment to defend one another. We will face and overcome together the twin threats of the 21st century: terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. All nations must unite to defeat these dangers. We will not allow differences of the moment to be exploited in ways that bring no solutions.

Our security is tied to peace and security throughout the world. Together, we are working to bring security to Afghanistan, and to root out the terrorists who remain there. We affirm a vision of a Middle East peace in which two states, Israel and Palestine, will live side by side in peace, security, and freedom. We welcome the fact that the roadmap designed to implement this vision will soon be delivered to Palestinians and Israelis, upon the confirmation of an empowered Palestinian Prime Minister. We would welcome the appointment of a Palestinian Prime Minister with sufficient authority to put an end to terrorism and consolidate necessary reforms. We shall look to the parties to work constructively together. We have today issued a statement outlining the challenge that Saddam Hussein poses for the world, and our vision of a better future for the Iraqi people.

We urge our friends and allies to put aside differences, and work together for peace, freedom and security. The friendship and solidarity between Europe and the United States is strong and will continue to grow in years to come.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement of the Atlantic Summit: A Vision for Iraq and the Iraqi People

March 16, 2003

Iraq's talented people, rich culture, and tremendous potential have been hijacked by

Saddam Hussein. His brutal regime has reduced a country with a long and proud history to an international pariah that oppresses its citizens, started two wars of aggression against its neighbors, and still poses a grave threat to the security of its region and the world.

Saddam's defiance of United Nations Security Council resolutions demanding the disarmament of his nuclear, chemical, biological, and long-range missile capacity has led to sanctions on Iraq and has undermined the authority of the U.N. For 12 years, the international community has tried to persuade him to disarm and thereby avoid military conflict, most recently through the unanimous adoption of UNSCR 1441. The responsibility is his. If Saddam refuses even now to cooperate fully with the United Nations, he brings on himself the serious consequences foreseen in UNSCR 1441 and previous resolutions.

In these circumstances, we would undertake a solemn obligation to help the Iraqi people build a new Iraq at peace with itself and its neighbors. The Iraqi people deserve to be lifted from insecurity and tyranny, and freed to determine for themselves the future of their country. We envisage a unified Iraq with its territorial integrity respected. All the Iraqi people—its rich mix of Sunni and Shiite Arabs, Kurds, Turkomen, Assyrians, Chaldeans, and all others—should enjoy freedom, prosperity, and equality in a united country. We will support the Iraqi people's aspirations for a representative government that upholds human rights and the rule of law as cornerstones of democracy.

We will work to prevent and repair damage by Saddam Hussein's regime to the natural resources of Iraq and pledge to protect them as a national asset of and for the Iraqi people. All Iraqis should share the wealth generated by their national economy. We will seek a swift end to international sanctions, and support an international reconstruction program to help Iraq achieve real prosperity and reintegrate into the global community.

We will fight terrorism in all its forms. Iraq must never again be a haven for terrorists of any kind.

In achieving this vision, we plan to work in close partnership with international insti-

tutions, including the United Nations; our Allies and partners; and bilateral donors. If conflict occurs, we plan to seek the adoption, on an urgent basis, of new United Nations Security Council resolutions that would affirm Iraq's territorial integrity, ensure rapid delivery of humanitarian relief, and endorse an appropriate post-conflict administration for Iraq. We will also propose that the Secretary General be given authority, on an interim basis, to ensure that the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people continue to be met through the Oil for Food program.

Any military presence, should it be necessary, will be temporary and intended to promote security and elimination of weapons of mass destruction; the delivery of humanitarian aid; and the conditions for the reconstruction of Iraq. Our commitment to support the people of Iraq will be for the long term.

We call upon the international community to join with us in helping to realize a better future for the Iraqi people.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this joint statement. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the 2003 Report of the Social Security Trustees

March 17, 2003

I commend the Social Security Board of Trustees for their hard work on their annual report.

As in last year's report, the Trustees confirmed that benefits for today's seniors are safe and secure. Promises made can and will be kept. The Trustees also once again have delivered a sobering message—Social Security, in its present form, is unsustainable for the long term. I share the Trustees' view that we need to explore new ways to ensure that Social Security remains strong and financially secure for America's children and grandchildren.

I am encouraged by the unprecedented level of bipartisan interest in Social Security modernization. Many comprehensive proposals have been put forward to strengthen Social Security for the long term. Although

these proposals differ in details, they are consistent in showing that if we give workers the opportunity to invest a portion of their wages in personal accounts, Social Security will be able to offer higher benefits than would otherwise be the case.

To repeat what I told Congress in the State of the Union Address this year: “As we continue to work together to keep Social Security strong and reliable, we must offer younger workers a chance to invest in retirement accounts that they will control and they will own.”

Social Security protects beneficiaries with disabilities, retirees, widows, and widowers. It also affects the lives of millions of tax-paying workers, the beneficiaries of tomorrow. As the report makes clear, Social Security faces long-term problems that demand bipartisan solutions.

I hope that Members of Congress will join with the Social Security Administration and other interested parties in a national dialog about how best to strengthen and protect Social Security. I look forward to working with Congress to see that Social Security remains sound and strong for today’s and tomorrow’s retirees.

Message on the Observance of Saint Patrick’s Day, 2003

March 17, 2003

I send greetings to those celebrating St. Patrick’s Day.

On this day, we honor the life of Patrick, patron saint of Ireland, and celebrate the rich history of the Emerald Isle. St. Patrick escaped from slavery and dedicated his life to helping others through his words and actions. His example of courage, determination, and faith captured the hearts of the Irish and continues to inspire countless people around the world.

In the United States, this day gives us an opportunity to recognize the vital contributions of Irish Americans. Throughout our history, America has welcomed millions of Irish immigrants to our country. These individuals have transformed our national identity and strengthened our families, our communities, and our national character.

Today, approximately one in four Americans can trace their ancestry in part to Ireland’s green shores. We are proud of our deep and lasting ties to Ireland and are grateful for the many Irish Americans who continue to enrich our Nation.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a happy St. Patrick’s Day.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Address to the Nation on Iraq

March 17, 2003

My fellow citizens, events in Iraq have now reached the final days of decision. For more than a decade, the United States and other nations have pursued patient and honorable efforts to disarm the Iraqi regime without war. That regime pledged to reveal and destroy all its weapons of mass destruction as a condition for ending the Persian Gulf war in 1991.

Since then, the world has engaged in 12 years of diplomacy. We have passed more than a dozen resolutions in the United Nations Security Council. We have sent hundreds of weapons inspectors to oversee the disarmament of Iraq. Our good faith has not been returned.

The Iraqi regime has used diplomacy as a ploy to gain time and advantage. It has uniformly defied Security Council resolutions demanding full disarmament. Over the years, U.N. weapon inspectors have been threatened by Iraqi officials, electronically bugged, and systematically deceived. Peaceful efforts to disarm the Iraqi regime have failed again and again because we are not dealing with peaceful men.

Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised. This regime has already used weapons of mass destruction against Iraq’s neighbors and against Iraq’s people.

The regime has a history of reckless aggression in the Middle East. It has a deep hatred of America and our friends. And it

has aided, trained, and harbored terrorists, including operatives of Al Qaida.

The danger is clear: Using chemical, biological or, one day, nuclear weapons obtained with the help of Iraq, the terrorists could fulfill their stated ambitions and kill thousands or hundreds of thousands of innocent people in our country or any other.

The United States and other nations did nothing to deserve or invite this threat. But we will do everything to defeat it. Instead of drifting along toward tragedy, we will set a course toward safety. Before the day of horror can come, before it is too late to act, this danger will be removed.

The United States of America has the sovereign authority to use force in assuring its own national security. That duty falls to me as Commander in Chief, by the oath I have sworn, by the oath I will keep.

Recognizing the threat to our country, the United States Congress voted overwhelmingly last year to support the use of force against Iraq. America tried to work with the United Nations to address this threat because we wanted to resolve the issue peacefully. We believe in the mission of the United Nations. One reason the U.N. was founded after the Second World War was to confront aggressive dictators actively and early, before they can attack the innocent and destroy the peace.

In the case of Iraq, the Security Council did act in the early 1990s. Under Resolutions 678 and 687, both still in effect, the United States and our allies are authorized to use force in ridding Iraq of weapons of mass destruction. This is not a question of authority. It is a question of will.

Last September, I went to the U.N. General Assembly and urged the nations of the world to unite and bring an end to this danger. On November 8th, the Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1441, finding Iraq in material breach of its obligations and vowing serious consequences if Iraq did not fully and immediately disarm.

Today, no nation can possibly claim that Iraq has disarmed, and it will not disarm so long as Saddam Hussein holds power. For the last 4½ months, the United States and our allies have worked within the Security Council to enforce that Council's long-

standing demands. Yet, some permanent members of the Security Council have publicly announced they will veto any resolution that compels the disarmament of Iraq. These governments share our assessment of the danger but not our resolve to meet it.

Many nations, however, do have the resolve and fortitude to act against this threat to peace, and a broad coalition is now gathering to enforce the just demands of the world. The United Nations Security Council has not lived up to its responsibilities, so we will rise to ours.

In recent days, some governments in the Middle East have been doing their part. They have delivered public and private messages urging the dictator to leave Iraq, so that disarmament can proceed peacefully. He has thus far refused.

All the decades of deceit and cruelty have now reached an end. Saddam Hussein and his sons must leave Iraq within 48 hours. Their refusal to do so will result in military conflict, commenced at a time of our choosing. For their own safety, all foreign nationals, including journalists and inspectors, should leave Iraq immediately.

Many Iraqis can hear me tonight in a translated radio broadcast, and I have a message for them: If we must begin a military campaign, it will be directed against the lawless men who rule your country and not against you. As our coalition takes away their power, we will deliver the food and medicine you need. We will tear down the apparatus of terror, and we will help you to build a new Iraq that is prosperous and free. In a free Iraq, there will be no more wars of aggression against your neighbors, no more poison factories, no more executions of dissidents, no more torture chambers and rape rooms. The tyrant will soon be gone. The day of your liberation is near.

It is too late for Saddam Hussein to remain in power. It is not too late for the Iraqi military to act with honor and protect your country by permitting the peaceful entry of coalition forces to eliminate weapons of mass destruction. Our forces will give Iraqi military units clear instructions on actions they can take to avoid being attacked and destroyed. I urge every member of the Iraqi military and intelligence services: If war comes, do

not fight for a dying regime that is not worth your own life.

And all Iraqi military and civilian personnel should listen carefully to this warning: In any conflict, your fate will depend on your actions. Do not destroy oil wells, a source of wealth that belongs to the Iraqi people. Do not obey any command to use weapons of mass destruction against anyone, including the Iraqi people. War crimes will be prosecuted. War criminals will be punished. And it will be no defense to say, "I was just following orders."

Should Saddam Hussein choose confrontation, the American people can know that every measure has been taken to avoid war and every measure will be taken to win it. Americans understand the costs of conflict because we have paid them in the past. War has no certainty, except the certainty of sacrifice. Yet, the only way to reduce the harm and duration of war is to apply the full force and might of our military, and we are prepared to do so.

If Saddam Hussein attempts to cling to power, he will remain a deadly foe until the end. In desperation, he and terrorists groups might try to conduct terrorist operations against the American people and our friends. These attacks are not inevitable. They are, however, possible. And this very fact underscores the reason we cannot live under the threat of blackmail. The terrorist threat to America and the world will be diminished the moment that Saddam Hussein is disarmed.

Our Government is on heightened watch against these dangers. Just as we are preparing to ensure victory in Iraq, we are taking further actions to protect our homeland. In recent days, American authorities have expelled from the country certain individuals with ties to Iraqi intelligence services. Among other measures, I have directed additional security of our airports and increased Coast Guard patrols of major seaports. The Department of Homeland Security is working closely with the Nation's Governors to increase armed security at critical facilities across America.

Should enemies strike our country, they would be attempting to shift our attention with panic and weaken our morale with fear.

In this, they would fail. No act of theirs can alter the course or shake the resolve of this country. We are a peaceful people. Yet we're not a fragile people, and we will not be intimidated by thugs and killers. If our enemies dare to strike us, they and all who have aided them will face fearful consequences.

We are now acting because the risks of inaction would be far greater. In 1 year, or 5 years, the power of Iraq to inflict harm on all free nations would be multiplied many times over. With these capabilities, Saddam Hussein and his terrorist allies could choose the moment of deadly conflict when they are strongest. We choose to meet that threat now, where it arises, before it can appear suddenly in our skies and cities.

The cause of peace requires all free nations to recognize new and undeniable realities. In the 20th century, some chose to appease murderous dictators, whose threats were allowed to grow into genocide and global war. In this century, when evil men plot chemical, biological, and nuclear terror, a policy of appeasement could bring destruction of a kind never before seen on this Earth.

Terrorists and terror states do not reveal these threats with fair notice, in formal declarations, and responding to such enemies only after they have struck first is not self-defense; it is suicide. The security of the world requires disarming Saddam Hussein now.

As we enforce the just demands of the world, we will also honor the deepest commitments of our country. Unlike Saddam Hussein, we believe the Iraqi people are deserving and capable of human liberty. And when the dictator has departed, they can set an example to all the Middle East of a vital and peaceful and self-governing nation.

The United States, with other countries, will work to advance liberty and peace in that region. Our goal will not be achieved overnight, but it can come over time. The power and appeal of human liberty is felt in every life and every land. And the greatest power of freedom is to overcome hatred and violence and turn the creative gifts of men and women to the pursuits of peace.

That is the future we choose. Free nations have a duty to defend our people by uniting

against the violent. And tonight, as we have done before, America and our allies accept that responsibility.

Good night, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 p.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Proclamation 7654—Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy, 2003

March 18, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

After nearly 400 years of rule by the Ottomans, Greece declared its independence on March 25, 1821. Long before that, ancient Athenians created a Greek culture that valued human liberty and dignity, and modern Greeks have demonstrated that preserving freedom is a powerful motivating force. Today, on Greek Independence Day, we recognize the ancient Greek influence in framing our own Constitution and celebrate the Greek-American heritage that continues to strengthen our communities and enrich our society.

Bound by history, mutual respect, and common ideals, America and Greece have been firm allies in the great struggles for liberty. Our countries fought together in every major twentieth-century war, and today, we remain united in the war against terror that threatens the future of every nation. We are working together to achieve peace and prosperity in the Balkans and southeastern Mediterranean. As the current president of the European Union, Greece is also playing a critical role in our efforts to confront many other global problems that affect our nations and our world.

Our commitment to the friendship between our two nations has grown from strong bonds of tradition and shared fundamental values. On Greek Independence Day, I en-

courage all Americans to recognize the countless contributions Greek Americans have made to our country. Embodying the independence and creativity that have made our country strong, their proud history is a source of inspiration for our Nation and our world.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 25, 2003, as Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy. I call upon all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 20, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 21.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Conclusion of Diplomatic Efforts With Regard to Iraq

March 18, 2003

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with section 3(b) of the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107-243), and based on information available to me, including that in the enclosed document, I determine that:

- (1) reliance by the United States on further diplomatic and other peaceful means alone will neither (A) adequately protect the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq nor (B) likely lead to enforcement of all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq; and

(2) acting pursuant to the Constitution and Public Law 107–243 is consistent with the United States and other countries continuing to take the necessary actions against international terrorists and terrorist organizations, including those nations, organizations, or persons who planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Ted Stevens, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 19.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting the Federal Ocean and
Coastal Activities Report**

March 19, 2003

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 5 of the Oceans Act of 2000 (33 U.S.C. 857–19), I transmit herewith the first biennial Federal Ocean and Coastal Activities Report as prepared by my Administration.

George W. Bush

The White House,
March 19, 2003.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on United
States Participation in the United
Nations and Its Affiliated Agencies**

March 19, 2003

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit herewith a report prepared by my Administration on the participation of the United States in the United Nations and its affiliated agencies during the calendar year 2001. The report is required

by the United Nations Participation Act (Public Law 264, 79th Congress).

George W. Bush

The White House,
March 19, 2003.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on the
National Emergency With Respect to
UNITA**

March 19, 2003

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I am providing a 6-month report prepared by my Administration on the national emergency with respect to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) that was declared in Executive Order 12865 of September 26, 1993.

George W. Bush

The White House,
March 19, 2003.

Address to the Nation on Iraq

March 19, 2003

My fellow citizens, at this hour, American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people, and to defend the world from grave danger.

On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war. These are opening stages of what will be a broad and concerted campaign. More than 35 countries are giving crucial support, from the use of naval and air bases, to help with intelligence and logistics, to the deployment of combat units. Every nation in this coalition has chosen to bear the duty and share the honor of serving in our common defense.

To all the men and women of the United States Armed Forces now in the Middle East, the peace of a troubled world and the hopes

of an oppressed people now depend on you. That trust is well-placed. The enemies you confront will come to know your skill and bravery. The people you liberate will witness the honorable and decent spirit of the American military.

In this conflict, America faces an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality. Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas, attempting to use innocent men, women, and children as shields for his own military, a final atrocity against his people.

I want Americans and all the world to know that coalition forces will make every effort to spare innocent civilians from harm. A campaign on the harsh terrain of a nation as large as California could be longer and more difficult than some predict. And helping Iraqis achieve a united, stable, and free country will require our sustained commitment.

We come to Iraq with respect for its citizens, for their great civilization, and for the religious faiths they practice. We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people.

I know that the families of our military are praying that all those who serve will return safely and soon. Millions of Americans are praying with you for the safety of your loved ones and for the protection of the innocent. For your sacrifice, you have the gratitude and respect of the American people. And you can know that our forces will be coming home as soon as their work is done.

Our Nation enters this conflict reluctantly. Yet our purpose is sure. The people of the United States and our friends and allies will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder. We will meet that threat now, with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of firefighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.

Now that conflict has come, the only way to limit its duration is to apply decisive force. And I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures, and we will accept no outcome but victory.

My fellow citizens, the dangers to our country and the world will be overcome. We will pass through this time of peril and carry on the work of peace. We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others, and we will prevail.

May God bless our country and all who defend her.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:16 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting

March 20, 2003

I called my Cabinet together to review our strategies to make the world more peaceful, to make our country more secure, to make the lives of our citizens as healthy and as prosperous as possible.

We heard from Secretary Rumsfeld, who briefed us on the early stages of the war. There's no question we've sent the finest of our citizens into harm's way. They perform with great skill and great bravery. We thank them. We thank their loved ones. We appreciate their sacrifice.

We heard from Secretary Powell, who briefed us on the ever-growing coalition of the willing, nations who support our deep desire for peace and freedom. Over 40 nations now support our efforts. We are grateful for their determination. We appreciate their vision, and we welcome their support.

As well, we discussed the need to make sure we have plans in place to encourage economic vitality and growth. We will continue to push for a Medicare system that is compassionate for our seniors. We care deeply about the fact that some children in our society can't read. We want the best of education for every citizen in America.

This Cabinet is confident about the future of our country. We're confident we can achieve our objectives. I'm grateful for their service to their country.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:53 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Message on the Observance of Nowruz

March 20, 2003

I send greetings to Iranian Americans observing Nowruz.

During Nowruz, people of Iranian descent celebrate the arrival of spring, a season of rebirth. This joyous occasion provides an opportunity for Persians to cherish their rich heritage and enjoy the company of family and friends in anticipation of happiness and blessings in the year ahead.

This year's observance comes during a challenging time for our Nation and the world. As the international community works to face great challenges and embrace important opportunities, America remains committed to peace, justice, and opportunity for all people. Throughout this time of renewal, we remain dedicated to bringing hope and freedom to troubled regions around the world.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a joyous celebration to you, your families, and your relatives and friends in Iran.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Executive Order 13290— Confiscating and Vesting Certain Iraqi Property

March 20, 2003

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and in order to take additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12722 of August 2, 1990,

I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, hereby determine

that the United States and Iraq are engaged in armed hostilities, that it is in the interest of the United States to confiscate certain property of the Government of Iraq and its agencies, instrumentalities, or controlled entities, and that all right, title, and interest in any property so confiscated should vest in the Department of the Treasury. I intend that such vested property should be used to assist the Iraqi people and to assist in the reconstruction of Iraq, and determine that such use would be in the interest of and for the benefit of the United States.

I hereby order:

Section 1. All blocked funds held in the United States in accounts in the name of the Government of Iraq, the Central Bank of Iraq, Rafidain Bank, Rasheed Bank, or the State Organization for Marketing Oil are hereby confiscated and vested in the Department of the Treasury, except for the following:

(a) any such funds that are subject to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations or the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, or that enjoy equivalent privileges and immunities under the laws of the United States, and are or have been used for diplomatic or consular purposes, and

(b) any such amounts that as of the date of this order are subject to post-judgment writs of execution or attachment in aid of execution of judgments pursuant to section 201 of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-297), provided that, upon satisfaction of the judgments on which such writs are based, any remainder of such excepted amounts shall, by virtue of this order and without further action, be confiscated and vested.

Sec. 2. The Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to perform, without further approval, ratification, or other action of the President, all functions of the President set forth in section 203(a)(1)(C) of IEEPA with respect to any and all property of the Government of Iraq, including its agencies, instrumentalities, or controlled entities, and to take additional steps, including the promulgation of rules and regulations as may be necessary, to carry out the purposes of this order. The Secretary of the Treasury may redelegate such functions in accordance with applicable

law. The Secretary of the Treasury shall consult the Attorney General as appropriate in the implementation of this order.

Sec. 3. This order shall be transmitted to the Congress and published in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

The White House,
March 20, 2003.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,
10:06 a.m., March 21, 2003]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on March 24.

**Message to the Congress Reporting
on Confiscation and Vesting of
Certain Iraqi Property**
March 20, 2003

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b) (IEEPA), and section 301 of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1631, I hereby report that I have taken additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12722 of August 2, 1990, by exercising my statutory authority to confiscate and vest certain property of the Government of Iraq and its agencies, instrumentalities, or controlled entities.

Consistent with section 203(a)(1)(C) of IEEPA, 50 U.S.C. 1702(a)(1)(C), as added by section 106 of the USA PATRIOT ACT, Public Law 107–56, I have ordered that certain blocked funds held in the United States in accounts in the name of the Government of Iraq, the Central Bank of Iraq, Rafidain Bank, Rasheed Bank, or the State Organization for Marketing Oil are hereby confiscated and vested in the Department of the Treasury. I have made exceptions for any such funds that are subject to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations or the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, or that enjoy equivalent privileges and immunities under the laws of the United States, and are or have been used for diplomatic or consular purposes. In addition, such amounts that, as

of the date of the order, are subject to post-judgment writs of execution or attachment in aid of execution of judgments pursuant to section 201 of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–297) are not being vested, provided that, upon satisfaction of the judgments on which such writs are based, any remainder of such excepted amounts shall, without further action, be confiscated and vested.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury authority to undertake all other action of the President and all functions of the President set forth in section 203(a)(1)(C) of IEEPA with respect to any and all property of the Government of Iraq, including its agencies, instrumentalities, or controlled entities, and to take additional steps, including the promulgation of rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued, which is effective immediately.

I have exercised these authorities in furtherance of Executive Orders 12722 and 12724 with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to our national security and foreign policy posed by the policies and actions of the Government of Iraq. I intend that such vested property should be used to assist the Iraqi people and to assist in the reconstruction of Iraq, and have determined that such use would be in the interest of and for the benefit of the United States.

The power to vest assets of a foreign government with which the United States is engaged in armed hostilities is one that has been recognized for many decades. This power is being used here because it is clearly in the interests of the United States to have these funds available for use in rebuilding Iraq and launching that country on the path to speedy economic recovery. In addition, this authority is being invoked in a limited way, designed to minimize harm to third parties and to respect existing court orders as much as possible.

George W. Bush

The White House,
March 20, 2003.

Memorandum on Determination Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as Amended

March 20, 2003

Presidential Determination No. 2003-17

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Determination Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as Amended

Pursuant to section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as amended, 22 U.S.C. 2601(c)(1), I hereby determine that it is important to the national interest that up to \$22 million be made available from the U.S. Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund to meet unexpected urgent refugee and migration needs that are anticipated in the event of a future humanitarian emergency in the Middle East, to include contingency planning for such needs. Such an emergency may arise if it becomes necessary for the United States and other nations to use military force to disarm the Iraqi regime of its weapons of mass destruction. These funds may be used, as appropriate, to provide contributions to international, governmental, and nongovernmental organizations, as well as for administrative expenses to manage this response by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

You are authorized and directed to inform the appropriate committees of the Congress of this determination and the obligation of funds under this authority, and to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on United States Efforts in the Global War on Terrorism

March 20, 2003

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On September 24, 2001, I reported the deployment of various combat-equipped and combat support forces to a number of locations in the Central and Pacific Command

areas of operation. On October 9, 2001, I reported the beginning of combat action in Afghanistan against terrorists and their Taliban supporters. In my reports to the Congress of March 20 and September 20, 2002, I provided supplemental information on the deployment of combat-equipped and combat support forces to a number of foreign nations in the Central and Pacific Command areas of operations and other areas. As a part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed, I am reporting further on United States efforts in the global war on terrorism.

Our efforts in Afghanistan have met with success, but as I have stated in my previous reports, the U.S. campaign against terrorism will be lengthy. To date, U.S. Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, have executed a superb campaign to eliminate the primary source of support to the terrorists who viciously attacked our Nation on September 11, 2001. The heart of al-Qaida's training capability has been seriously degraded. The Taliban's ability to brutalize the Afghan people and to harbor and support terrorists has been virtually eliminated. Pockets of al-Qaida and Taliban forces remain a threat to U.S. and coalition forces and to the Afghan government. What is left of both the Taliban and the al-Qaida fighters is being pursued actively and engaged by U.S. and coalition forces. Additionally, training missions and combat operations with Pakistani special forces are ongoing near the Afghan/Pakistan border.

Due to our success in Afghanistan, we have detained hundreds of al-Qaida and Taliban fighters who are believed to pose a continuing threat to the United States and its interests. The combat-equipped and combat support forces deployed to Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in the Southern Command area of operations since January 2002, continue to conduct secure detention operations. We currently hold more than 600 enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay. All are being treated humanely and, to the extent appropriate and consistent with military necessity, in a manner consistent with the principles of the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

In furtherance of our worldwide efforts against terrorists who pose a continuing and imminent threat to the United States, our

friends and allies, and our forces abroad, we continue operations in other areas around the globe. Our relationship with the Government and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) developed and matured throughout 2002. Last year's actions from February to July 2002 on Basilan Island, with AFP in command and with U.S. forces in a support role, helped to drive hundreds of Abu Sayyaf Group terrorists from the island, restoring order and reestablishing government services. To ensure that the AFP has the skills to fight terrorism over the long term, we have a robust security assistance training program and a variety of exercises that will provide the AFP much needed counter-terrorism training and equipment. There are approximately 300 combat-equipped and combat support U.S. military personnel working with the AFP and U.S. forces continue to plan with the AFP for possible future activities. Continued U.S. support is warranted as the Government of the Philippines has provided unwavering support in the global war on terrorism.

Additionally, we continue to conduct maritime interception operations on the high seas in the Central and European Command areas of responsibility to prevent the movement, arming, or financing of international terrorists who pose a continuing threat to the United States.

Combat-equipped and combat support forces also have been deployed to Georgia and Yemen to assist the armed forces of those countries in enhancing their counter-terrorism capabilities, including by training and equipping their armed forces. Similar U.S. forces have deployed to Djibouti to command and control operations and other activities as necessary against al-Qaida and other international terrorists in the Horn of Africa region. These activities include providing oversight for urban and maritime counter-terrorism training with the Yemen special operations forces. We continue to assess options for working with other nations to assist them in this respect.

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. In addition, these actions are consistent with Public Law 107-40.

As I stated in my previous reports, it is not possible to know at this time either the duration of combat operations or the scope and duration of the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter the terrorist threat to the United States. I will direct additional measures as necessary to exercise our right to self-defense and to protect U.S. citizens and interests. Such measures may include short notice deployments of special operations and other forces for sensitive operations in various locations throughout the world.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution and Public Law 107-40. Officials of my Administration and I have been communicating regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress, and we will continue to do so. I appreciate the continuing support of the Congress in our efforts to protect the security of the United States of America and its citizens, civilian and military, here and abroad.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Ted Stevens, President pro tempore of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

March 21, 2003

The President. I've asked the Members of Congress to come up so that members of my administration can keep the leadership up to date as the war to liberate Iraq and to remove weapons of mass destruction out of Iraq proceeds. The military briefings, of course, will continue to be given out of the Pentagon. Secretary Rumsfeld will be briefing this afternoon.

I also really want to thank Members of Congress, both House Members, Senate Members, members of both political parties, for the strong resolutions that came off the floor of their respective bodies, resolutions

which said loud and clear: Our country supports the men and women in uniform; not only do we support those brave souls who are sacrificing on our behalf, but we want to thank their parents and their families for their dedication as well.

As Secretary Rumsfeld said, we're making progress. We will stay on task until we've achieved our objective, which is to rid Iraq of weapons of mass destruction and free the Iraqi people so they can live in a society that is hopeful and democratic and at peace in its neighborhood.

All of us involved here in Washington are extremely proud of the skill and bravery of our young Americans who are willing to sacrifice for something greater than themselves.

So it's my honor to welcome the Members here. We will continue to keep them briefed as this war progresses. And I want to thank them for the unity, the message of unity.

Thank you all for coming.

Secretary Rumsfeld's Briefing

Q. Is Saddam dead or alive, sir?

The President. Secretary Rumsfeld will be briefing today.

Q. Do you want to give us any details, as the Commander in Chief, of how things are going?

The President. Secretary Rumsfeld will be briefing today.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:17 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A reporter referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of the Budget Resolution

March 21, 2003

As we engage in action to ensure freedom and security, it is imperative that we stay focused on important domestic priorities, including creating jobs and strengthening economic growth at home. With passage of the budget resolution, the House has spoken clearly that future economic growth and job creation requires passing the bold plan that I proposed. I commend the House for its timely action and look forward to working with Congress to ensure that we fund our

priorities, enact policies to spur growth, and restrain spending.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Commencement of Military Operations Against Iraq

March 21, 2003

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On March 18, 2003, I made available to you, consistent with section 3(b) of the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107-243), my determination that further diplomatic and other peaceful means alone will neither adequately protect the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq, nor lead to enforcement of all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq.

I have reluctantly concluded, along with other coalition leaders, that only the use of armed force will accomplish these objectives and restore international peace and security in the area. I have also determined that the use of armed force against Iraq is consistent with the United States and other countries continuing to take the necessary actions against international terrorists and terrorist organizations, including those nations, organizations, or persons who planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001. United States objectives also support a transition to democracy in Iraq, as contemplated by the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-338).

Consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148), I now inform you that pursuant to my authority as Commander in Chief and consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1) and the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107-243), I directed U.S. Armed Forces, operating with other coalition forces, to commence combat operations on March 19, 2003, against Iraq.

These military operations have been carefully planned to accomplish our goals with the minimum loss of life among coalition military forces and to innocent civilians. It is not possible to know at this time either the duration of active combat operations or the scope or duration of the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to accomplish our goals fully.

As we continue our united efforts to disarm Iraq in pursuit of peace, stability, and security both in the Gulf region and in the United States, I look forward to our continued consultation and cooperation.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Ted Stevens, President pro tempore of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on the
National Emergency With Respect to
Persons Who Commit, Threaten To
Commit, or Support Terrorism**

March 21, 2003

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith the 6-month periodic report prepared by my Administration on the national emergency with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism that was declared in Executive Order 13224 of September 23, 2001.

George W. Bush

The White House,
March 21, 2003.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

**Digest of Other
White House Announcements**

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

March 15

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom to discuss the situation in Iraq.

Also in the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

March 16

In the morning, the President traveled to Lajes Field Air Force Base in the Azores, Portugal, where, in the evening, he had dinner with Prime Minister Jose Manuel Durao Barroso of Portugal, President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain, and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister John Howard of Australia and Secretary of State Colin Powell.

March 17

In the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain, and King Juan Carlos of Spain to discuss the situation in Iraq.

Also in the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings and met with the National Security Council and Secretary of State Colin Powell.

In the afternoon, the President had a telephone conversation with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to discuss possible military action against Iraq.

In the evening, in the Roosevelt Room, the President met with members of Congress to discuss the situation in Iraq.

March 18

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Vladimir Putin of Russia to discuss the situation in Iraq, Russia-U.S. relations, and President Putin's invitation to President Bush to visit St. Petersburg, Russia, in May. Also in the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Hu Jintao of China to congratulate him on taking office on March 15 and to discuss China-U.S. relations, the situations in Iraq and North Korea, and the President's commitment to a one-China policy.

Later in the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings and met with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

March 19

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom to discuss possible military action against Iraq and peace efforts in the Middle East. He then had intelligence and FBI briefings. Later, he met with the National Security Council in the Situation Room and then met with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge and Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York City to discuss antiterrorism measures in New York City.

In the afternoon, the President met with Central Intelligence Agency Director George Tenet to discuss possible military action against Iraq. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Richard B. Myers, USAF, to discuss possible military action against Iraq.

In the evening, the President met with speechwriter Michael Gerson to discuss his address to the nation later that evening. Later, he had dinner with Mrs. Bush in the Residence. He then had a telephone conversation with White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card to discuss possible military action against Iraq.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Paul Biya of Cameroon to the White House on March 20 to discuss bilateral relations, regional issues, trade and development efforts, and combating HIV/AIDS.

March 20

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice to discuss military action against Iraq, which commenced the previous evening. Then, in the Oval Office, he had intelligence and FBI briefings. He also met with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Later in the morning, the President met in the Oval Office with Vice President Dick Cheney, CIA Director George Tenet, and White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card to discuss military action against Iraq.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Vice President Dick Cheney.

During the day, the President had separate telephone conversations with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Amir Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani of Qatar, and King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain to discuss military action against Iraq.

In the evening, in the Oval Office, the President had a meeting and dinner with President Paul Biya of Cameroon.

The President announced his intention to nominate Frank Libutti to be Under Secretary for Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection at the Department of Homeland Security.

The President announced his intention to nominate John E. Buchanan to be a member of the National Museum Services Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint William Batoff as a member of the Advisory Committee to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (Public).

The President declared an emergency in Delaware and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by record/near record snow on February 14–19.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in

the area struck by severe storms and flooding on February 14–26.

The President declared an emergency in New Jersey and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by record/near record snow on February 16–17.

March 21

In the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings and met with the National Security Council. He also met with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert, House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, and Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle.

In the afternoon, the President went to Camp David, MD.

The President announced his intention to nominate Karen P. Tandy to be Administrator of Drug Enforcement at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to appoint Robert Bruce Korver as a member of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee (international sales expert).

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Advisory Commission on Drug-Free Communities: Judith A. Cushing (State organization); Arthur Dean (national organization); Dennis Griffith (national organization); Patricia J. Kempthorne (public); Charles W. Larson, Jr. (State organization); Ronald Luce (public); Flor Santalo-Sherbahn (State organization); Peggy Sapp (national organization); and Loretta M. Wenger (national organization).

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted March 19

Eric M. Javits,
of New York, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Pamela J. H. Slutz,
of Texas, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Mongolia.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released March 16

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Released March 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Released March 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Transcript of a statement in the James S. Brady Briefing Room by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary: Meeting With Cameroonian President Paul Biya

Released March 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Delaware

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to New Jersey

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Tennessee

Released March 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

**Acts Approved
by the President**

NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.